

Little pirates have fun in park

YO HO HO! Little treasures had a great time down at Wat Tyler Country Park in Pitsea. Family Mosaic housing association organised a pirate-themed fun day for families at the beauty spot, off Pitsea Hall Lane. Among those taking part were Justin Gent, Ashton Breamore, three, Edie Connelly, and Aiden-Jay Breamore, two.

Picture: PAUL WATSON BA48360_03



Council sets up team to handle traveller evictions

By PAUL OFFORD
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A STRING of high level council meetings have been cancelled to allow a crack team of officers to concentrate on the Dale Farm eviction.

Basildon councillors were sent an internal e-mail, which was leaked to the Echo, telling them a full council meeting planned for September 22 is being postponed.

This is because a special site clearance project team of council officers is moving into the St George's Suite, at the Basildon Centre, St Martin's Square, where council meetings usually take place.

SOME MAY STAY IN ESSEX

TRAVELLERS evicted from Dale Farm could stay in the county.

Hughie Smith, president of the National Gypsy Council said families at Dale Farm have bought land in Essex ahead of being evicted. He said it was likely some families would

move on to land in the county which they already own.

Mr Smith said: "They are not idiots. They have probably been planning for this for some time. A lot of them will move to Wolverhampton. Some have land in Hemel Hempstead and some have land in Essex."

Four other meetings have also been cancelled between September 13 and 22, and it is understood the clearance team for Dale Farm travellers site, at Crays Hill, will be based at the suite throughout this period.

The eviction is likely to take place during this fortnight - although it could happen as early as August 31.

Malcolm Buckley, cabinet member for the environment, said: "When the eviction takes

place there will need to be a number of officers working closely together to deal with any issues that arise.

"Officers may have to deal with homelessness or social services enquiries from the travellers."

It is feared the total cost of evicting travellers from the site will be as much as £17.5 million.

The 96 families living illegally on the site maintain they cannot leave because there are no alternative sites for them to move to.

Lynda Gordon, leader of the opposition Labour group, said: "We are against the eviction.

Almost £20million is being spent at a time when money is tight and people are losing their jobs."

Boulders block entry to car park

MASSIVE boulders have appeared at the entrance of a new development site.

Basildon Council owns the land at the back of Gloucester Park swimming pool in Broadmayne, Basildon, but is in the process of transferring it to property developer Barratt Wilson Bowden to build 500 homes.

The council has denied the large rocks have been put there to keep travellers out.

Hundreds of families are due to be evicted from the Dale Farm

ers across the borough have already begun blocking entrances to their land to prevent travellers moving in once they have been booted out.

Simon Hughes, Basildon Council's manager of property and regeneration services, said: "The long-stay car park behind Gloucester Park swimming pool is shortly due to be transferred to Barratt Wilson Bowden when they commence development work.

"The entrance to the car park was blocked to prevent access



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